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# Preparing Yourself and Your Family

**Wednesday, April 28, 2021**

Reverend Monsignor Henry Breier  
Rector, Cathedral Basilica of St. Louis

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# Pastoral Care of the Sick

Visits to  
the Sick

Sacrament of  
Anointing  
the Sick

Commendation  
of the Dying

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# Pastoral Care of the Sick



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- "The sacrament of anointing is the proper sacrament for those Christians whose health is seriously impaired by sickness or old age."
- Is anyone among you sick? He should summon the presbyters of the church, and they should pray over him and anoint [him] with oil in the name of the Lord, and the prayer of faith will save the sick person, and the Lord will raise him up. If he has committed any sins, he will be forgiven. (James 5:14-15)

Introduction to the Sacrament of Anointing of the Sick

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# Pastoral Care of the Sick



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- The special grace of the sacrament of anointing of the sick has these effects:
  - Uniting the sick person to the passion of Christ for his good and that of the whole church
  - Strengthening, peace and courage to endure in a Christian manner the sufferings of illness or old age
  - Forgiveness of sins, if the sick person was not able to obtain it through the sacrament of Penance
  - Restoration of health, if it is conducive to the salvation of his soul
  - Preparation for passing over to eternal life

*Catechism of the Catholic Church 1532*

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# Pastoral Care of the Sick



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## Who Can Receive the Anointing of the Sick

- Those whose health is seriously impaired by illness or old age
  - May be repeated if condition worsens or another illness arises
  - May occur prior to surgery
  - Elderly may be anointed if they become weak
  - Children may be anointed if they have the use of reason
  - May be given to a person who has lost consciousness
  - The person must be alive to receive the sacrament

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# Pastoral Care of the Sick



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## Elements

- Essential Elements
  - Prayer
  - Laying on of Hands by the priest
  - Anointing with oil
- Other Elements
  - Sacrament of Reconciliation
  - Reception of Holy Communion
  - Apostolic Pardon (if death is imminent)

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# Pastoral Care of the Sick

## Elements



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- Viaticum
  - Liturgy of Penance with the Apostolic Pardon
  - Reception of Holy Communion and food for the journey
- Commendation of the Dying
  - Prayer of Commendation

Go forth, Christian soul, from this world in the name of God the almighty Father, who created you, in the name of Jesus Christ, Son of the living God who suffered for you, in the name of the Holy Spirit, who was poured out upon you, go forth faithful Christian, May you live in peace this day, may your home be with God in Zion, with Mary, the virgin Mother of God, with Joseph, and all the angels and saints.

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# The Catholic Funeral

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# The Catholic Funeral

- The best time to plan funeral and cemetery arrangements is before death, allowing adequate time for reflection.
- Give the gift of planning to your loved ones by developing your own written end-of-life plans.



# The Catholic Funeral

## Purpose

1. To commend the dead to God
2. To support and strengthen hope to the living
3. To give witness to our faith in our own resurrection



# The Catholic Funeral

## Catholic Funeral Rites

1. Vigil Service (during the wake)
2. Funeral Liturgy
3. Rite of Committal (at the time of burial)

Through its funeral rites, the Church commends the dead to the merciful love of God and pleads for the forgiveness of their sins.

# The Catholic Funeral



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## 1. Vigil Service

- A time to remember the life of the deceased and commend him/her to God. In prayer, mourners ask God for consolation and strength to support one another.
- Celebrated between the time of death and the funeral liturgy, or if there is no funeral liturgy, before the committal.
- Conducted at the funeral home or church gathering space.

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# The Catholic Funeral

## 2. Funeral Liturgy

- The central liturgical celebration of the Christian community for the deceased.
- When one of its members dies, the Church encourages the celebration of the funeral liturgy at a Mass.

[www.usccb.org/prayer-and-worship/bereavement-and-funerals/overview-of-catholic-funeral-rites.cfm](http://www.usccb.org/prayer-and-worship/bereavement-and-funerals/overview-of-catholic-funeral-rites.cfm)

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# The Catholic Funeral

## 2. Funeral Liturgy

### Purpose of the Funeral Mass

When the celebration takes place in church the Eucharist is the heart of the Paschal reality of Christian death. In the Eucharist, the Church expresses her efficacious communion with the departed: offering to the Father in the Holy Spirit the sacrifice of the death and resurrection of Christ, she asks to purify his child of his sins and their consequences and to admit him to the Paschal fullness of the table of the Kingdom. It is by the Eucharist thus celebrated that the community of the faithful, especially the family of the deceased, learn to live in communion with the one who 'has fallen asleep in the Lord,' by communicating in the Body of Christ of which he is a living member and, then, by praying for him and with him.

*Catechism of the Catholic Church, 1689*

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# The Catholic Funeral

## 2. Funeral Liturgy

- Funeral Mass
  - Introductory Rites, including
    - Greeting, sprinkling the casket with holy water, pall placed on the casket
    - Gathering hymn as the funeral procession walks down the aisle
  - Liturgy of the Word
  - Liturgy of the Eucharist
  - Remarks of Remembrance (optional)
  - Song of Farewell (incensing)
  - Final Commendation
  - Procession to the Place of Committal
  - Hymn



# The Catholic Funeral

## 2. Funeral Liturgy

### Remarks of Remembrance

- A family member or friend may speak in remembrance of the deceased before the final commendation begins.<sup>1</sup>
  - Should enhance the liturgy, not detract from the ritual, describing how the person lived their Christian faith.
  - Should be written and approved by the pastor/presider.
  - Limited to 3-4 minutes.
- Additional remarks may be shared at the Vigil Service or the gathering following the Rite of Committal.

<sup>1</sup>Order of Christian Funerals, 197.2





# The Catholic Funeral

## 2. Funeral Liturgy

### Funeral Liturgy Outside Mass

- When Mass cannot be celebrated, a funeral liturgy outside Mass can be celebrated at the church or in the funeral home, preferably conducted by a priest or deacon.



# The Catholic Funeral

## 3. Rite of Committal

- The final act of a faith community in caring for the body of its deceased member, who passes with farewell prayers into the company of those already with God.
- Normally celebrated beside the place of interment.



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# Disposition of the Body

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# Disposition of the Body



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## Options

	Average Cost <sup>1</sup>
1. Casket Burial/Entombment	\$9,000
2. Cremation Burial/Entombment	\$3,500
3. Anatomical or Organ & Tissue Donation	\$1,500

<sup>1</sup>Cost estimates provided by Catholic Cemeteries.

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# Disposition of the Body



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## 1. Casket Burial/Entombment

- Church's position
  - Catholic belief in the body as the temple of the Holy Spirit—as well as faith in the resurrection of the body—places a strong preference on entombing or burying the body intact.
  - Burial, with the body always intact, is a tradition inherited from Judaism; Jesus was buried (entombed).

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# Disposition of the Body



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## 2. Cremation Burial/Entombment

- Church's position
  - Cremation was forbidden by the Church until 1963 because it was used as a testimony against belief in the resurrection of the dead.
  - Although cremation is permitted, Catholic teaching stresses the preference for burial or entombment of the body of the deceased. This is in imitation of the burial of the body of Jesus.

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# Disposition of the Body

## 2. Cremation



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This is the Body once washed in baptism, anointed with the oil of salvation, and fed with the bread of life. Our identity and self-consciousness as a human person are expressed in and through the body. Thus, the Church's reverence and care for the body grows out of a reverence and concern for the person whom the Church now commends to the care of God.

USCCB, Committee on the Liturgy, *Reflections on the Body, Cremation, and Catholic Funeral Rites*

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# Disposition of the Body

## 2. Cremation



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- When, for a good reason, cremation is chosen, the full course of the *Order of Christian Funerals* should still be celebrated.
- The preservation of this order allows for greater expression of our beliefs and values, especially the sacredness of human life, the dignity of the individual person and the resurrection of Jesus, the firstborn from the dead.

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# Disposition of the Body

## 2. Cremation

### Before or After the Funeral?

- In the Archdiocese of St. Louis, cremated remains are allowed to be present for the Funeral Liturgy.



# Disposition of the Body

## 2. Cremation

### Cremated Remains

- Church teaching insists cremated remains are given the same respect as the body, including the manner in which they are carried and the attention given to transport and placement.
- Cremated remains are to be buried or entombed, preferably in a Catholic cemetery.
- The following treatments of cremated remains are NOT considered the reverent dispositions required by the Church:
  - Scattering
  - Dividing
  - Keeping in the home



## 3. Anatomical or Organ & Tissue Donation

- Church's position
  - The gift of organs after death is legitimate and can be meritorious.
  - Pope Francis called organ donation "a testimony of love for our neighbor," and Pope St. John Paul II called it an example of "everyday heroism."

*Catechism of the Catholic Church, 2301*  
John Paul II, "The Gospel of Life"

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# Disposition of the Body

## 3. Anatomical or Organ & Tissue Donation

- Church's position, continued
  - Organ transplants are in conformity with the moral law if the physical and psychological dangers and risks to the donor are proportionate to the good sought for the recipient. Organ donation after death is a noble and meritorious act and is to be encouraged as a expression of generous solidarity. It is not morally acceptable if the donor or his proxy has not given explicit consent. Moreover, it is not morally admissible to bring about the disabling mutilation or death of a human being, even in order to delay the death of other persons.<sup>1</sup>
  - Remains, after organ donation or medical research, must be treated with reverence and entombed or buried.
    - Burial might not occur for 1-3 years after death and donation.

<sup>1</sup>Catechism of the Catholic Church, 2296



# Disposition of the Body

## 3. Anatomical or Organ & Tissue Donation

### Considerations

- Decision to donate body should be made prior to death through the signing of documents with witnesses.
- Acceptance of body at time of death is not guaranteed.
- Three Catholic cemeteries (Sts. Peter and Paul, Calvary and Resurrection) offer "Sacred to the Memory" markers for those whose bodies have been donated, with name, year of birth and year of death.



# Disposition of the Body

## 3. Anatomical or Organ & Tissue Donation

- Saint Louis University cremates all anatomical gifts and buries the remains at Sts. Peter and Paul Cemetery.
- Logan University returns cremated remains to family; unreturned remains are buried in Holy Cross Cemetery.
- Washington University scatters the cremated remains over University-owned property. THIS PRACTICE IS NOT CONSISTENT WITH CHURCH TEACHING.

# Disposition of the Body



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## Interment

- Purchase a grave, crypt or niche
  - Contact Catholic Cemeteries for pricing and availability and to select site
- Existing family lot/mausoleum
- Veterans Cemetery (i.e., Jefferson Barracks National Cemetery)
  - Must meet service requirements

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# Catholic Funeral & Cemetery Planning



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## Next Steps:

- Pray
- Consult with your parish priest, deacon or lay staff
- Consult with:
  - Funeral homes/mortuaries/cremation centers
  - Catholic Cemeteries
- Complete the Funeral and Cemetery Planning Workbook
- Share your written plans with your parish and loved ones

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# Questions & Answers

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